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# HELVETIA

Magazine for the members of the Swiss Society of New Zealand Inc  
Helvetia is in its 76th year

November 2010

## Canton of Geneva

The canton of Geneva is the westernmost canton or state of Switzerland, surrounded on all sides by France, except for 4.5 km of common border with Vaud. With 282 km<sup>2</sup> it is a small canton, a bit smaller than Schaff-

and Savoyard territories at the Vienna Congress.

The population of the Canton contains 148,500 people originally from Geneva (33.7%), 122,400 Swiss from other cantons (27.6%) and 170,500 foreign-



The city of Geneva dominates the economy of the canton. It is a center of commerce, trade and finance. Geneva is of international significance also as a financial center. A great number of Swiss banks are located in Geneva, particularly in the area of private banking.

The service industry is most significant in Geneva where there are headquarters of a number of international corporations and organizations, such as the United Nations and the International Labor Organization. Agriculture is commonplace in the hinterlands of Geneva, particularly wheat and wine. Precision machinery and instruments are other branches where the economy of the canton of Geneva is strong. This is also reflected in the tradition of watchmaking in Geneva.

The main educational institution is the University of Geneva, founded in 1559 by Calvin.



Bonjour Genève!

hausen. The canton of Geneva is considered one of the most cosmopolitan areas of the country. As a center of the Calvinist Reformation, the city of Geneva has had a great influence on the canton, which essentially consists of the city and its hinterland.

Geneva was an independent republic until 1798, but had been an "everlasting ally" of the Swiss Confederation since 1584. During the Napoleonic wars, Geneva was occupied and annexed to France. After its liberation in 1813, Geneva joined the Swiss Confederation in 1815 as the 22nd canton, having been enlarged by French

ers (38.7%), from 180 different countries. Including people holding multiple citizenship, 54.4% of people living in Geneva hold a foreign passport. While Geneva was historically considered a Protestant city, there are now over twice as many Roman Catholics (39.5%) as Protestants (17.4%) living in the Canton. 22% of the inhabitants claim no religion, and some did not respond. 4.4% practice Islam.

However, the canton is still officially considered Protestant. The surrounding regions of France are mostly Roman Catholic.

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